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SHANA OH YOSHITSUNE

by SAWADA Hirofumi /沢田 ひろふみ

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Shana Oh Yoshitsune 61

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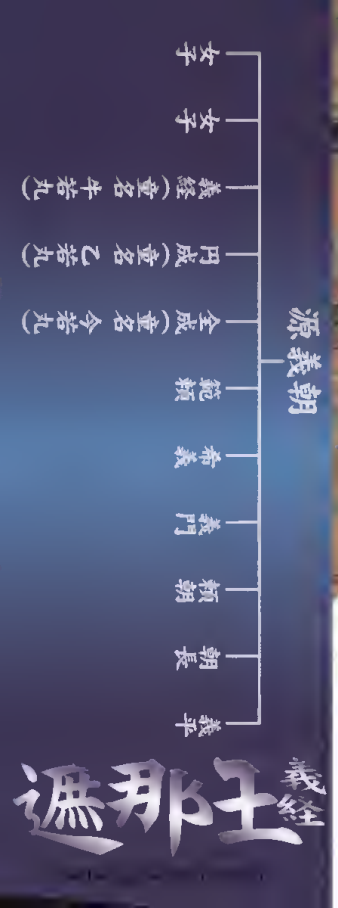

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馬術に優れた金国人、リヤンの技を目にした義経は、リヤンに頼み込んでそれを教わる。だが、何日練習しても、うまく裸馬に乗れない。何か秘密があるはずだが……？

MONTHLY SHONEN MAGAZINE COMICS

沢田ひろふみ作品

遮那王 —義経— 1～17

山賊王 1～8

以下続刊

遮那王 義経

奥州編

沢田ひろふみ

The story so far...

Sensing that Kiyomori was keeping a close eye on Hyouta, who is now living his life as Ushiwakamaru, Hyouta's stepfather Fujiwara no Naganari sends Hyouta to Hiraizumi in Oshu. Together with Musashibo Benkei, the "Vassal of Loyalty", and Ise-Saburou Yoshimori, the "Vassal of Courage", Yoshitsune entered Hiraizumi. Yoshitsune met with Fujiwara no Hidehira, the Ruler of Oshu, and abruptly asks for his assistance in defeating the Heike. After being told to have patience by Hidehira, he met with and eventually gained the trust of Hidehira's sons, Kunihira and Yasuhira, and the Satou brothers, Tsugunobu and Tadanobu of Shinobu.

During this time, Yoshitsune witnesses the horseback riding techniques of Lian, a visitor from Jin. The people of Jin are acclimated to their horses from a young age. Having been requested to teach Yoshitsune how to ride a horse, Lian first teaches him how go around the body of an unsaddled horse. However, no matter how many times he tries, it doesn't go well. The fact that he's unable to perform a technique which even the children of Jin can has actually rekindled a fire within Yoshitsune.

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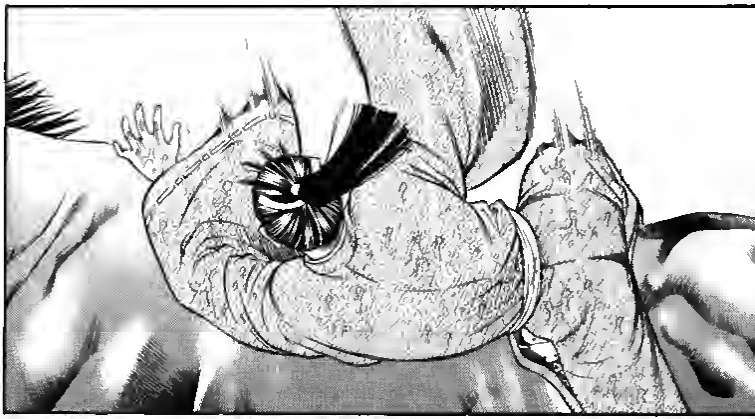


The Essence of Horseback Riding

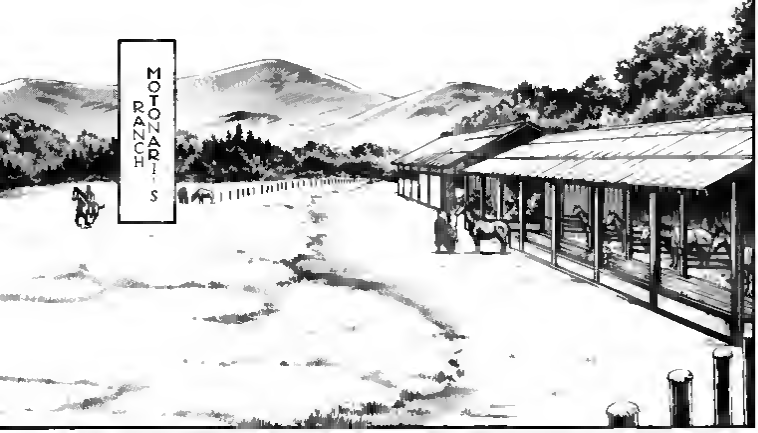
THIS HORSE RIDING TECHNIQUE,
WHICH THE JIN USED TO ROUT AN ARMY THIRTY TIMES THEIR SIZE,

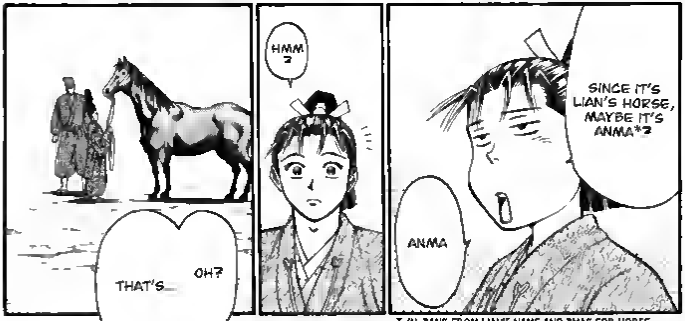
I'LL DEFINITELY MASTER IT,
AND MAKE THIS MY OWN!!

UGH.

GAH!
...
DAMN IT
YOU'VE BEEN AT THIS FOR OVER TWO WEEKS, AND YOU ARE STILL LIKE THIS
AND LIAN SHOULD ONLY BE COMING ONCE EVERY THREE DAYS
THERE HAS TO BE A TRICK TO THIS
IF I CAN FIGURE IT OUT, I CAN DEFINITELY DO THIS!!

BUT THE HORSE YOU BORROWED FROM LIAN IS EXHAUSTED FROM YOU RIDING IT EVERY DAY...
SHOULDN'T YOU SWITCH HORSES?
YOU'RE RIGHT
SHOULD I ASK FOR ANOTHER HORSE AT MOTONARI-SAMA'S RANCH...?
MAYBE A DIFFERENT HORSE WILL GIVE ME A CHANGE OF PACE AND I'LL BE ABLE TO DO THIS
DON'T COUNT ON IT
LOOKS LIKE HE DOESN'T UNDERSTAND YET...





T/N: "AN" FROM LIAN'S NAME AND "MA" FOR HORSE

MOTONARI-SAMA!
OHH, YOSHITSUNE-DONO.
WHAT'S GOING ON? WHAT BRINGS YOU PERSONALLY TO THE RANCH?
WELL, ACTUALLY, I MADE A NICE PURCHASE RECENTLY
CAME TO SEE HOW HE WAS DOING.
NICE PUR-CHASE?
SEE, THIS ONE
OHH- A JIN STUDHORSE, HUH. THIS IS A FINE, LARGE HORSE
I'M GOING TO HAVE THIS ONE MATE WITH MY HORSES AND BREED LARGE HORSES.
I BOUGHT A JIN STUDHORSE!
MISAKU, THIS ONE'S A GOOD HORSE, SO MAKE SURE YOU TAKE GOOD CARE OF HIM.
YES, PLEASE LEAVE IT TO ME

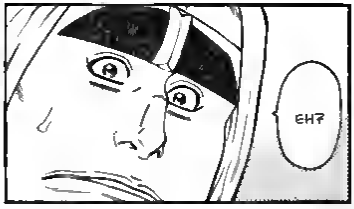
HE COMES TO SEE HIM LIKE A FATHER WHO CHECKS ON HIS DAUGHTER WHO HAS GONE TO BE A WIFE
BECAUSE THE PEOPLE OF JIN TREAT THEIR HORSES DEARLY
THE PERSON FROM JIN ALSO COMES ONCE IN A WHILE TO LOOK IN ON IT
EH, THE PERSON FROM JIN? EVEN THOUGH THEY SOLD IT?
YES
TREAT THEIR HORSES DEARLY...
...
THE PEOPLE OF MY COUNTRY,
WE TREAT THEM AS FAMILY, AND LOVE THEM

. . . . . .

ACTUALLY,
I'M GOING TO KEEP GOING WITH LIAN-DONO'S HORSE.

WHAT BRINGS YOU HERE, YOSHITSUNE-DONO?
AND YOU?

NO, IT'S OKAY.
AH, ACTUALLY, IT SEEMS THIS HORSE IS TIRED, SO—


EH?

I'LL TAKE CARE OF HIM DURING THAT TIME, TOO.
I'LL HAVE HIM REST FOR 2-3 DAYS.
BUT THIS HORSE IS TIRED OUT.
EH, TAKE CARE OF HIM?
NO, IF IT'S A HORSE I'M RIDING,
I REALLY THINK I SHOULD AT LEAST TAKE CARE OF HIM MYSELF.
YOU DON'T HAVE TO DO THAT YOURSELF, YOSHITSUNE-DONO YOU CAN REST EASY LEAVING HIM TO MISAKU HERE.
TAKING CARE OF HORSES IS DIFFICULT IF YOU'RE NOT ACCUSTOMED TO IT.

I'LL TAKE CARE OF EVERYTHING THIS HORSE NEEDS!!
I'LL TRY TREATING HIM LIKE FAMILY, JUST LIKE THE PEOPLE OF JIN
HMM, WELL, THAT'S FINE DEDICATION, BUT...
MISAKU-SAN, PLEASE HELP ME WHEN I NEED IT, OKAY?!
O-OKAY...
ANMA!
LET'S GET ALONG, OKAY?
SUCH AN ECCENTRIC...
AND HE CHOSE ANMA FOR THE NAME
ブルル!!

FIRST, I'LL RUB DOWN HIS BODY NICE AND CLEAN!!
ALL RIGHT, LET'S DO THIS!
GSHEEEZE
キュッ
キュッ
キュッ
キュッ
キュッ
キュッ
AND WASH THE LEGS!!
OKAY, NEXT I'LL TAKE THE DIRT OFF THE HOOVES!!
PHEW

OHH! SO BRILLIANT!
HOW'S THAT? YOU FEEL BETTER ALL NICE AND CLEAN, RIGHT, ANMA?!!
PLEASE LIFT HIS TAIL AND WIPE THE INSIDE OF HIS REAR END
THAT'S REFRESHING FOR THE HORSE
EH?
THERE IS MORE, YOSHITSUNE-SAMA
WITH YOUR POINTER FINGER,
YOU RUB IT LIKE THIS!!
LIKE THIS...?
...RUB IT...
HIS REAR END?

TAKE CARE OF HIM WITH LOVE... THAT'S WHAT'S IMPORTANT!!
I CAN'T COMPLAIN THAT IT'S DIRTY!!
OKAY!!
SINCE YOU'VE RUBBED HORSE DUNG ON YOUR BODY, THIS SHOULD BE NO PROBLEM.
I-I GUESS
HEHEHE... I'M NOT SOME AMATEUR WHO DOESN'T KNOW HOW TO WORK WITH HORSES
I HAVE A CLEAR UNDERSTANDING OF THE HORSE'S MIND
HUH?
DON'T GET BEHIND HIM TOO SUDDENLY AND GET KICKED
AND IF I'M SURE TO LET HIM KNOW THAT I'M MOVING TO HIS REAR, THE HORSE WON'T KICK ME.
I TOUCH HIM LIKE THIS...
ペチ
ペチ
ペチ
ペチ

I'M MOVING TO THE REAR.
YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE AFRAID.
HERE I GO.
OKAY, I RAISE THE TAIL LIKE THIS, AND...
HMM?!
EH?

HE KICKED!!
WHY?!
WAH!

Gulp

AH,
THAT REMINDS ME. I HEARD THIS FROM THE JIN WHO WAS THE PREVIOUS OWNER OF THE STUDHORSE.

HMM, NORMALLY, THAT SHOULD HAVE WORKED FINE.

MISAKU-SAN, WHAT'S GOING ON HERE?!

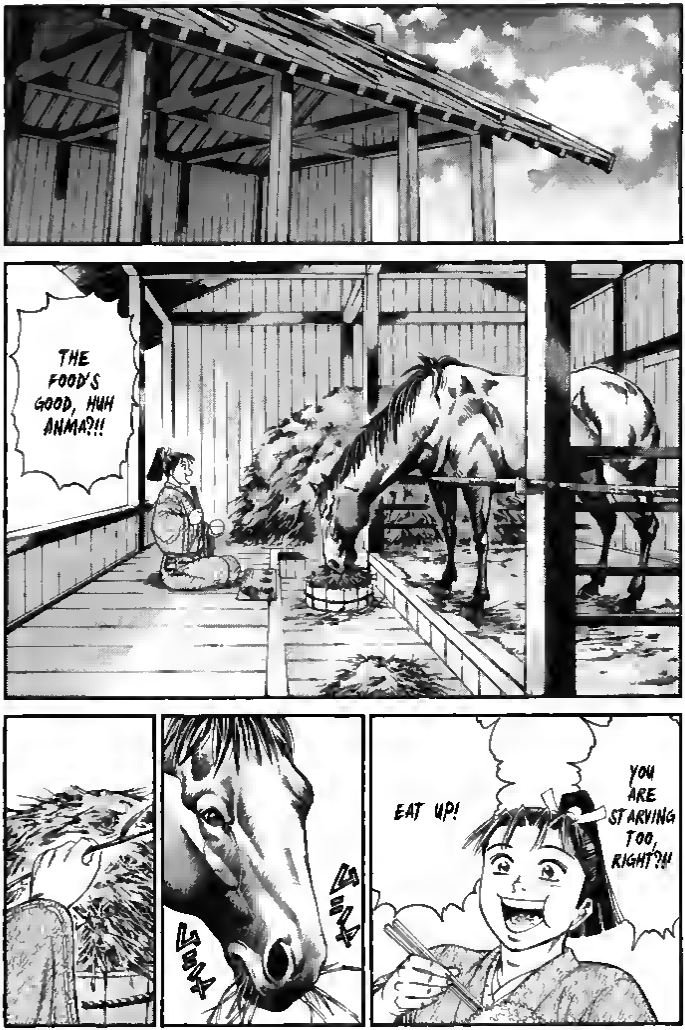
THERE ARE MANY WOLVES IN JIN, AND THEY ATTACK HORSES FROM BEHIND. SO HORSES THAT HAVE BEEN ATTACKED EVEN ONCE,
IF THEY ARE APPROACHED DIRECTLY FROM BEHIND OR SOMETHING JUMPS AT IT, THEY WILL DEFINITELY STRIKE BACK OUT OF FEAR

That's so sad...
By wolves?!
IT'S ME, NOT A WOLF.
DON'T BE AFRAID. IT'S OKAY.
THE SIDE?
I SUPPOSE YOU HAVE NO CHOICE BUT TO WIPE FROM THE SIDE RATHER THAN DIRECTLY BEHIND.
SO WHAT SHOULD I DO?
FIRST, I'LL LIFT THE TAIL.
OKAY, NOT DIRECTLY BEHIND, BUT AROUND HERE

PHEW
THERE, I'M DONE!
RUB
RUB
RUB
OKAY, IT'S WORKING!!
GAH!!
COULD IT BE THAT HE HATES ME?

FUJIWARANO MOTONARI MANSION
I'M STARVING!
OHH!
HEY, YOSHITSUNE
HMM?
LET'S EAT!!
WHERE ARE YOU GOING?

I'M GOING TO EAT WITH ANMA.
WHAT?! ARE YOU SAYING YOU'RE GOING TO EAT WITH A HORSE?!
WOULD PEOPLE NORMALLY GO THAT FAR...?
WELL, I HAVE TO TAKE CARE OF HIM!


THE FOOD'S GOOD, HUH ANMA?!!
EAT UP!
YOU ARE STARVING TOO, RIGHT?!!
ムシャ
ムシャ

I CAN'T BELIEVE YOU MAKE THIS LOOK SO GOOD!
GAH, GROSS!!
PHFF!
PHFF!
WANT SOME FISH?
I SEE.
YOU DON'T
BRR!

WHAT'S WRONG? IS IT ITCHY?
HMM?
HERE?
HERE?
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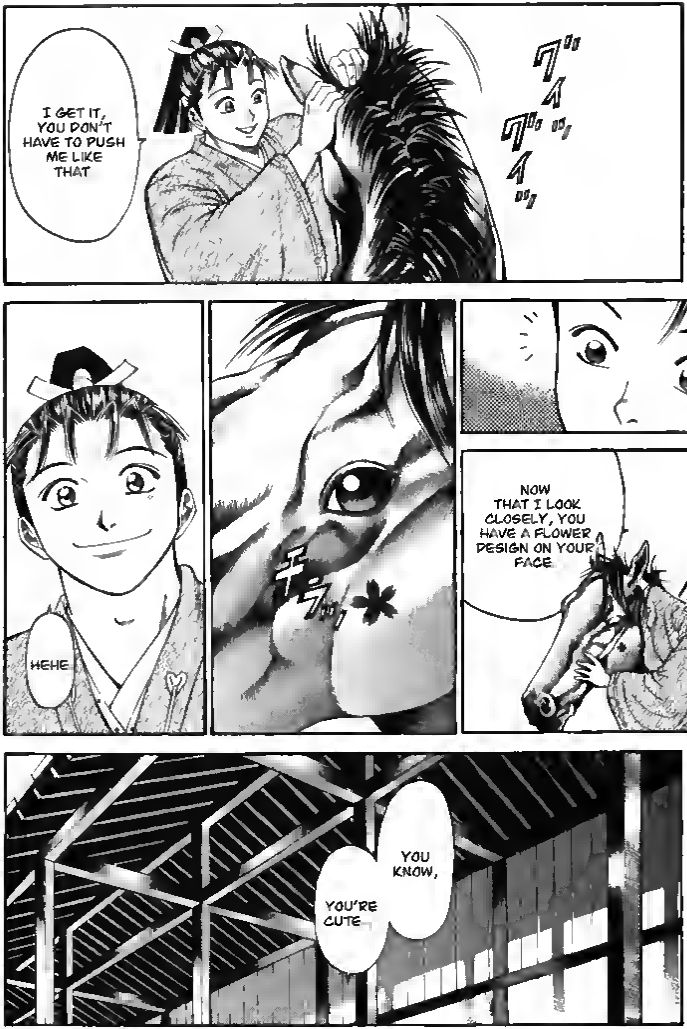
SO IT FEELS GOOD HERE?
I SEE


I GET IT, YOU DON'T HAVE TO PUSH ME LIKE THAT
ヴィヴィ
HEHE
NOW THAT I LOOK CLOSELY, YOU HAVE A FLOWER DESIGN ON YOUR FACE
YOU KNOW, YOU'RE CUTE

YOSHI-TSUNE-SAMA.
YOU SHOULD START THINKING ABOUT COMING...
ZZZ
ZZZ
HEH
TO THINK HE WOULD EVEN SLEEP WITH HIM THAT'S JUST LIKE YOSHITSUNE-SAMA TO BE THOROUGH IN WHAT HE DOES

PLEASE!
ANZU-SAN, NEW RAGS!
YOU'VE BEEN IN THE STABLE THESE PAST THREE DAYS AND YOU STINK WORSE THAN THE HORSES.
HEY, DON'T JUST CLEAN THE HORSE, CLEAN YOURSELF, TOO
UGH!
I DON'T REALLY SMELL IT MUCH, THOUGH.
I DO?

MAYBE WE SHOULD GET BACK TO PRACTICE SOON
WELL, HE'S BEEN RESTING FOR THREE DAYS NOW
WAS ANMA ABLE TO RECUPERATE?
YOU THINK? NOT SOUNDING TOO CONFIDENT AGAIN
ANYWAY, I'LL GO TO THE MOUNTAIN AND TRY AGAIN
HMM, I THINK...
OH, YOU THINK YOU CAN DO IT THIS TIME? DO YOU UNDERSTAND THE HORSE NOW?

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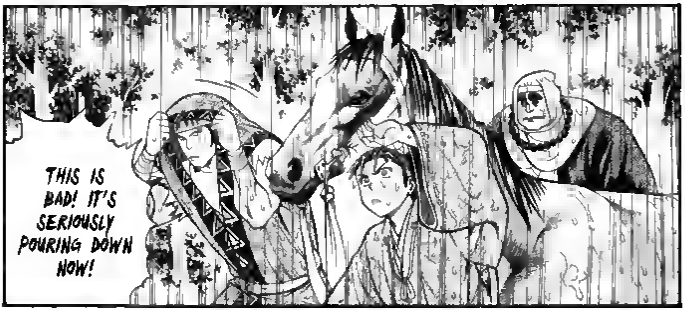
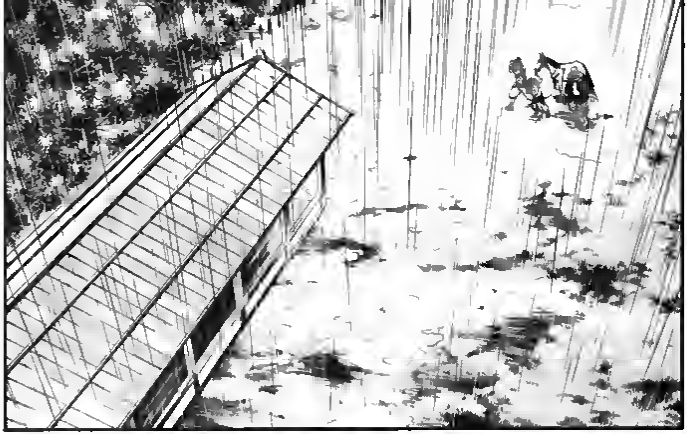
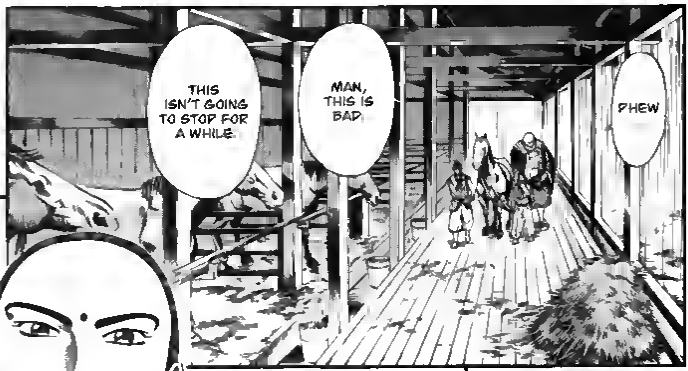

THIS IS BAD! IT'S SERIOUSLY POURING DOWN NOW!

WHY NOT WORRY ABOUT US HUMANS A LITTLE, TOO.
LET'S GO BACK TO THE RANCH AND GET OUT OF THE RAIN FOR NOW!
I DON'T WANT ANMA TO CATCH A COLD!!
THIS IS NO TIME TO BEING PRACTICING...




PHEW
MAN, THIS IS BAD.
THIS ISN'T GOING TO STOP FOR A WHILE.

WERE YOU ABLE TO PROPERLY TAKE CARE OF THE HORSE?

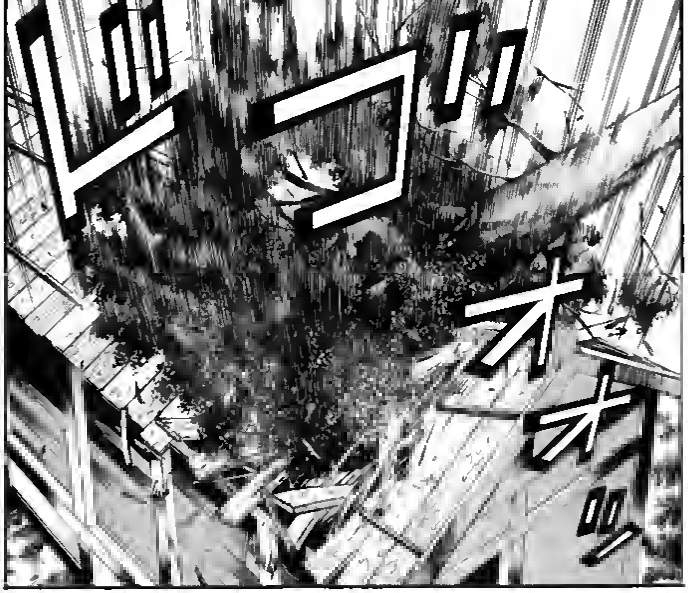
LIAN-DONO!!

MOTONARI-SAMA'S STUPHORSE WAS BOUGHT FROM LIAN-DONO
I CAME TO SEE HOW THIS HORSE WAS DOING AND IT STARTED RAINING
WHY ARE YOU HERE?
YES, THIS IS A HORSE I RAISED WELL
OHH~
SO THIS STUPHORSE WAS YOURS TOO, LIAN-DONO.
ANMA?
ザァァァ
THEN, WAS HE TOGETHER,
WITH ANMA HERE?

ゴゴゴ

IT'S OKAY.
ドドド

AH!!
IT'S GOING TO FALL THIS WAY!
RUN FOR IT!
WAHH!


ドゴーン
オオ

CRACK
CRACK
CRACK

EH?!
HE'S NOT HERE!

AH, WHERE'S YOSHITSUNE-SAMA?!

HEY!
EVERY-ONE OKAY?!

YOSHI-
TSUNE-
SAMA!!
Y-
YOSHI-
TSUNE-
SAMA!!
!!!
IT'S
OKAY.

NO NEED TO WORRY,
ANMA.

drip
YOSHI-TSUNE-SAMA!!
NEIGH!
AH!!

THE STUD-HORSE!!
SNORT
SNORT
YOSHITSUNE-SAMA, I'LL GET YOU OUT RIGHT AWAY!
UGH!

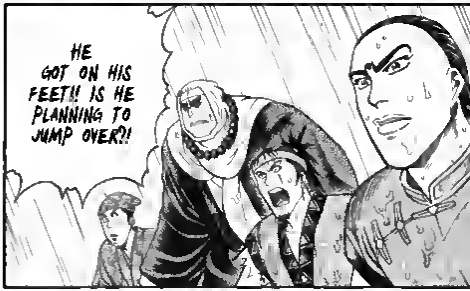
ANMA-!!
AH!
WITH THIS VISIBILITY, HE MIGHT BOLT INTO A TREE IN HIS CONFUSION!!
MORE IMPORTANTLY, THE STUDHORSE IS FRIGHTENED AND DANGEROUS!
YOSHITSUNE-DONO, THAT HORSE IS FINE! HE WILL RETURN SOON!!
I'LL GO STOP THE STUDHORSE!!
WHAT ?!
THERE'S JUST ONE HORSE I STOPPED WITH ITS REINS!!
MISAKU-SAN, ARE THERE ANY HORSES LEFT?!

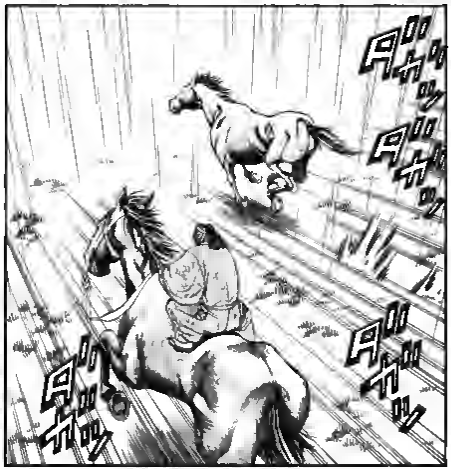
HAA!!
I'LL GO!!
STOP! IT'S IMPOSSIBLE FOR YOU!!
HOW DOES HE PLAN TO STOP THAT FRIGHTENED STUDHORSE?
THAT GUY..
HAA!
HAA!

WILL I BE ABLE TO JUMP ONTO HIM?!
I HAVE NO CHOICE BUT TO GET ON THAT STUD HORSE AND STOP HIM.
HOW DO I STOP HIM?
!?
BUT I CAN'T POSSIBLE LET MOTONARI-SAMA'S PRECIOUS STUDHORSE GET HURT... I HAVE TO DO IT!!
At this rate, forget riding him, it'll be difficult just to approach him
He's shaken and wary of humans

Slide

Impossible It's too far
DON'T...


HE GOT ON HIS FEET!! IS HE PLANNING TO JUMP OVER?!



JUST A LITTLE MORE!!
A LITTLE MORE...
ZOO
IT'S A BIT FAR, BUT I'LL GIVE IT A SHOT!!
SO THIS IS THE CLOSEST I CAN GET?
HMM?

!!!
AHH... ANOTHER HORSE WENT IN BETWEEN THEM!!
WHAT?!!
HMM?
With this I...
Damn, I'm even more separated from the studhorse

ANMA!!
Y-YOU'RE,
ALL RIGHT... IT'S DO OR DIE!!

I-IS YOSHITSUNE-SAMA PLANNING TO JUMP ONTO THAT SECOND HORSE?
ｻｯ
ｵｳ
AND THE HORSE NEXT TO HIM HATES ANYTHING JUMPING ON HIM TO BEGIN WITH HE'LL JUST GET THROWN OFF
THAT'S RECKLESS EVEN IF HE GETS ON THE NEXT HORSE, THE STUDHORSE IS FRIGHTENED AND WILL BREAK AWAY
STOP-!!
IF HE TRIES TO JUMP OVER AT THAT SPEED AND FALL, HE'LL DIE FOR SURE!!
LET'S GO!!

ﾀｯ
HE JUMPED!!
ﾚｯﾂｰﾝ
HE GOT ON?!
UGH!

AH!!

YOSHIT SUNE-SAMA!!
NO GOOD, HE FELL!!
HE DIDN'T
NO
EH?

グルン
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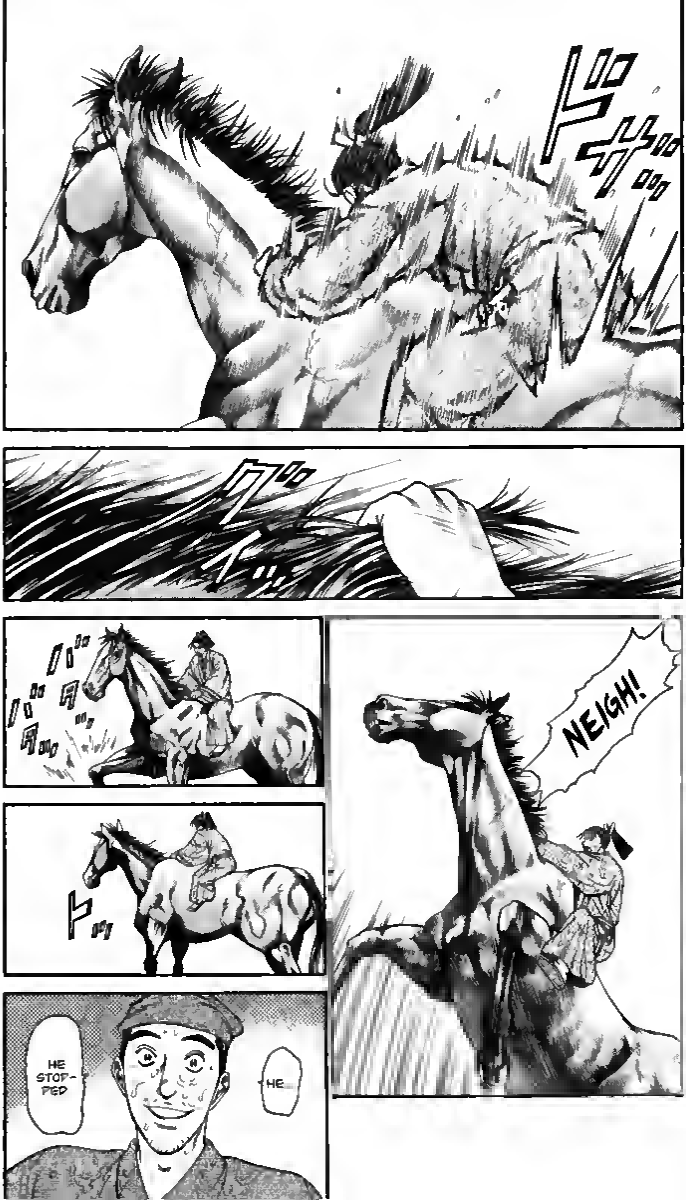
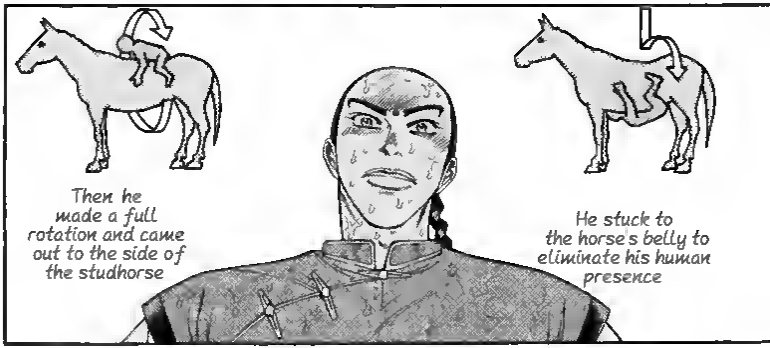
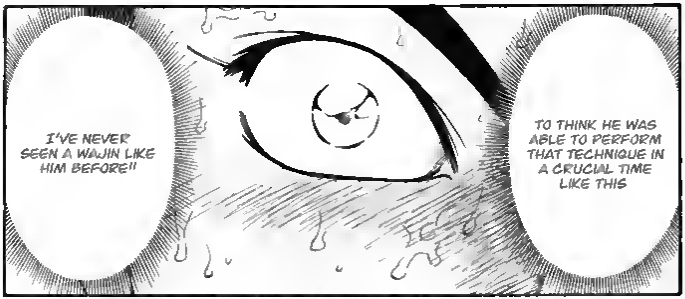
...
HE DIDN'T FALL!!
HE...
YOU'RE NOT GETTING AWAY!!


NEIGH!
HE STOPPED
HE


Then he made a full rotation and came out to the side of the studhorse
He stuck to the horse's belly to eliminate his human presence



*T/N: WA WAS THE ANCIENT CHINESE WORD FOR JAPAN. WAJIN IS JAPANESE PERSON

PHEW
I WAS REALLY WORRIED THERE
THANK YOU VERY MUCH
THANKS TO YOU, YOSHITSUNE-SAMA, I'LL BE ABLE TO SHOW MY FACE TO MOTONARI-SAMA AGAIN
I'M GLAD HE CAME BACK UNHURT
HMM?

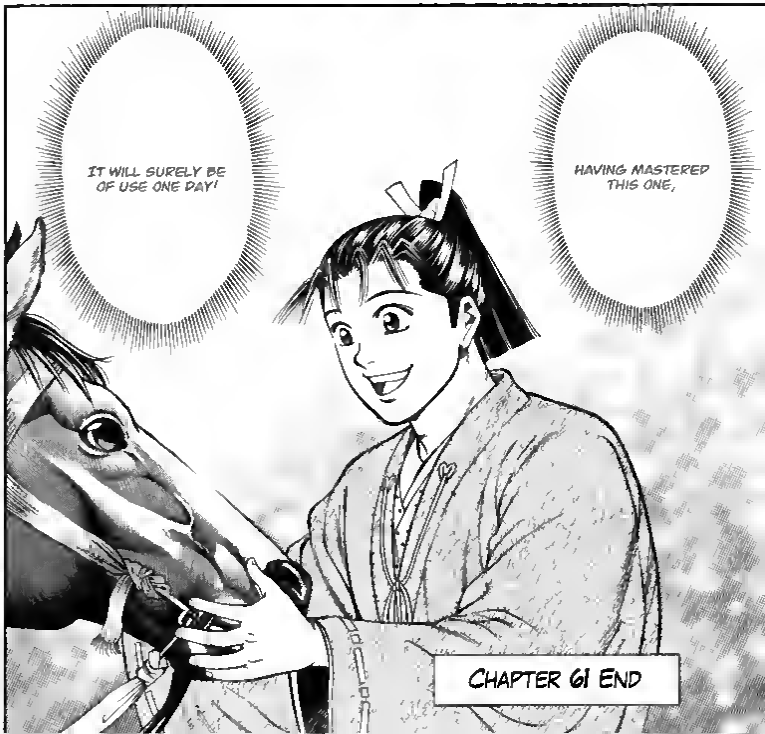
HEY, HEY, DON'T BITE!
OHH, ANMA. SO YOU CAME BACK
THANKS TO YOU, I MANAGED TO STOP HIM THANK YOU
IT WAS BECAUSE HE CAME IN BETWEEN US, AS IF TO TELL ME TO RIDE HIM AND GO AROUND
YEAH.
BUT YOSHITSUNE, I'M SURPRISED YOU WERE ABLE TO USE THAT TECHNIQUE AT A TIME LIKE THIS WHEN YOU WERE STRUGGLING SO MUCH BEFORE
EH?
NO, THAT'S NOT IT
SO THE RESULTS OF YOUR PRACTICE CAME OUT WITHOUT YOU THINKING

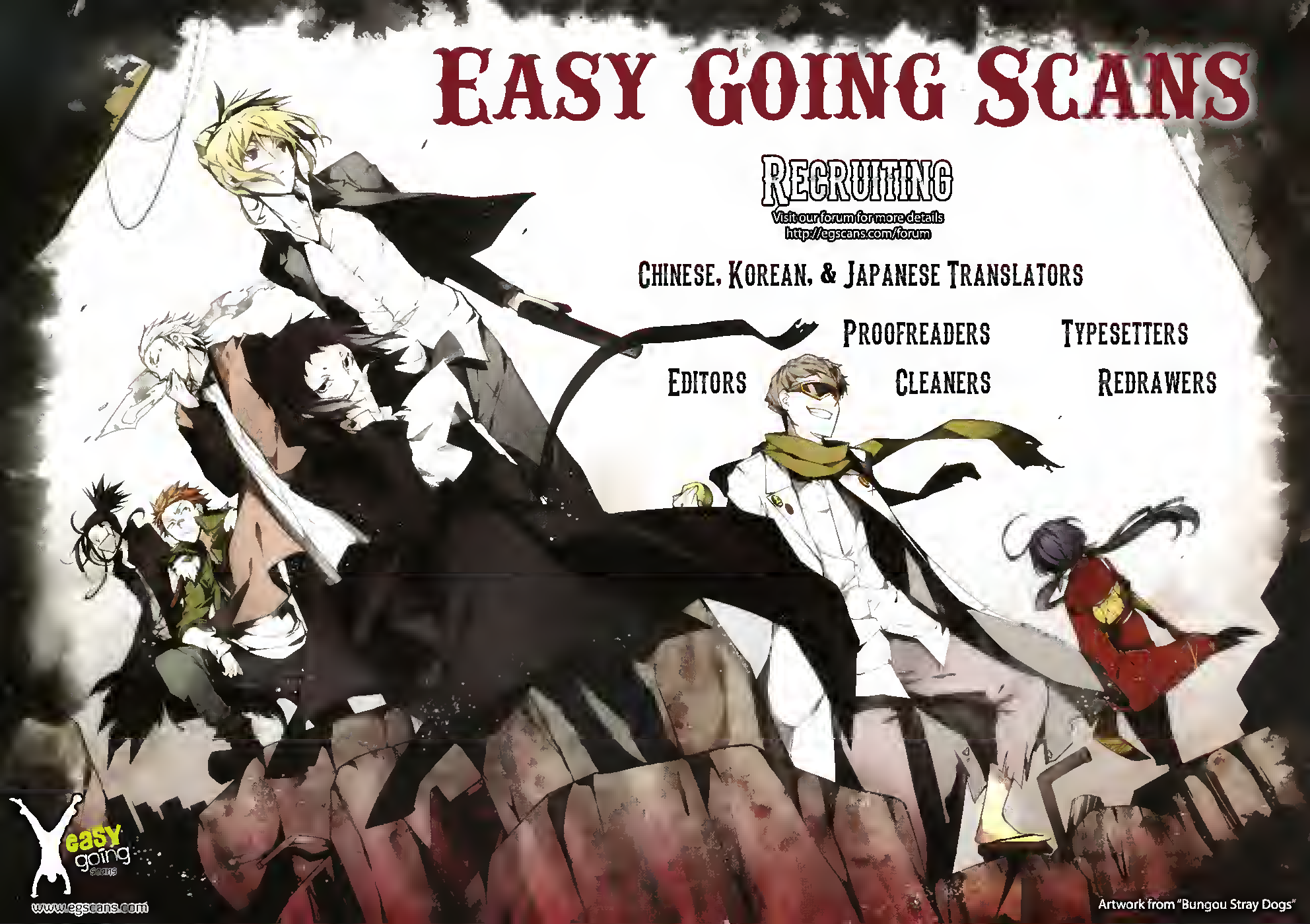
IT WAS TRYING TO DROP THE NUISANCE WRAPPING AROUND HIS BODY
UNTIL NOW, THAT HORSE WAS RUNNING WHILE TRYING TO THROW YOSHITSUNE-DONO OFF.
WHAT DO YOU MEAN? YOSHITSUNE WAS ABLE TO DO IT BECAUSE THE HORSE ACCEPTED HIM?
BECAUSE YOSHITSUNE TOOK CARE OF HIM AND PROTECTED HIM, THE HORSE ACCEPTED HIM AS HIS MASTER.
THE HORSE TOOK SMALLER STEPS WHILE RUNNING THAT'S WHY HE WAS ABLE TO GO AROUND WITHOUT FALLING
BUT THIS TIME, WHEN HE GOT TO THE BELLY, SO AS NOT TO DROP HIM,
THAT THIS GUY WAS WORRIED ABOUT ME
YEAH, I KNEW WHEN I GOT TO THE BOTTOM.

YOSHI-TSUNE-DONO,
I'LL ADMIT FOR THE FIRST TIME THAT A WAJIN WAS ABLE TO MASTER RIDING A HORSE
RIDER AND HORSE BECOME ONE
WHEN A PERSON IS CONSIDERATE OF THE HORSE, AND THE HORSE OF THE PERSON,
YOU PASSED.
I PASSED?!
I...

IT WAS WORTH TAKING CARE OF HIM SO FERVENTLY
YES-!
BENKEI, HE SAID I PASSED!!
HUH?
Rub
Rub
ALL RIGHT. THIS IS ALL THANKS TO YOU
WHAT, ARE YOU TELLING ME TO SCRATCH BEHIND YOUR EARS?

YOSHITSUNE-DONO
IN THE FUTURE, WHEN YOU ARE IN NEED OF A DIFFICULT HORSERIDING TECHNIQUE


HAVING MASTERED THIS ONE,
IT WILL SURELY BE OF USE ONE DAY!
CHAPTER 61 END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SHANA OH YOSHITSUNE

by SAWADA Hirofumi /沢田 ひろふみ

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Shana Oh Yoshitsune 62

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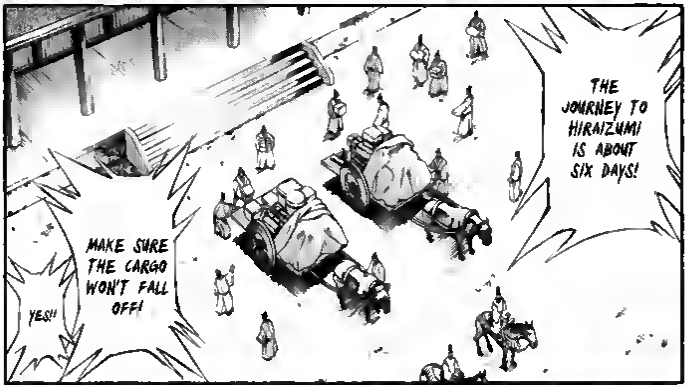
Chapter 62 - The Monk and the Mother

*TL NOTE: MUTSU NO KUNI IS ANOTHER NAME FOR OSHU



THE PREPARATIONS ARE COMPLETE
MM
LET US GO
YES
두두두
두두두
두두두

TAIRANO KIYOMORI MANSION
KIYOMORI-SAMA, HAVE YOU HEARD?
FUJIWARA NO NORISUE-DONO AND HIS NEPHEW, NORIMITSU-DONO
ARE HEADING TO MUTSU PROVINCE AS ITS NEWLY APPOINTED GOVERNOR
I'VE HEARD
THEN, WERE THEY ENTRUSTED WITH THE MATTER IN QUESTION?
I SENT INSTRUCTION BY WAY OF NORIMORI.

TO SEARCH OSHU AND SEE WHETHER OR NOT USHIWAKA IS THERE!!
IS HIRAIZUMI IN OSHU. HE IS SURELY THERE!
WITH NAGANARI'S INFLUENCE IN KURAMA, THE ONLY PLACE HE COULD HAVE ESCAPED TO...
ONCE I CONFIRM THAT AND ASCERTAIN HIS WHEREABOUTS...
WHAT DO YOU PLAN TO DO?
ONCE YOU CONFIRM THAT,

I HAVE ANY NUMBER OF WAYS TO BURY HIM IN DARKNESS!!
ゴゴゴ
YOU JUST WAIT, USHIWAKA
I WILL GRAB THAT TAIL OF YOURS THIS TIME FOR CERTAIN!!

PROVINCE MUTSU
HIRAIZUMI
MM~ IT'S PRETTY WARM TODAY, FEELS REALLY NICE...
HEY, WHERE ARE YOU PLANNING TO GO?
MAYBE I'LL GO OVER TO TSUGUNOFU-KUN'S HOUSE TO PLAY SINCE I'M FREE.
YOU'RE NOT A KID...
BUT I FEEL SO NICE. IT'S MAKING ME KIND OF SLEEPY...
HAA~

WALK STRAIGHT AND WATCH WHERE YOU'RE GOING!!
WHAT'S WRONG WITH YOU? YOU'RE YOUNG ENOUGH!
WOW, SHE'S CARRYING FOUR LOGS
S-SORRY
GUH!
DO YOU STILL WANT TO DRINK MILK THAT BADLY?!
OR MAYBE IT'S THAT

HAHAHAHAHA, LOG HAG! THAT'S A GOOD ONE!
WHAT ARE YOU DOING, YOU LOG HAG?! I'M HITTING YOUR STOMACH BEFORE YOUR BREASTS!
PUAH!
YOU'RE FULL OF LIFE!
MMPH!
MMPH!
MMPH!
HUH?
ARE YOU HUNGRY?!
GOOD!
YOU CAN DO ANYTHING AS LONG AS YOU HAVE LIFE IN YOU!
THESE ARE THE LOG HAG'S SPECIAL DANGO!
HAHAHA-HAHAHA..!
IT'LL GIVE YOU EVEN MORE LIFE!!
HERE, EAT THESE!

THIS IS GOOD
SHE LOOKS LIKE SHE DOESN'T HAVE A CARE IN THE WORLD
WH-WHAT'S WITH THAT CHEERFUL, HEARTY OLD LADY...?
HMM?

THOSE MONKS LOOK PRETTY DIRTY.
ARE THEY FROM A POOR TEMPLE?

AH!!
CAREFUL, CAREFUL
THIS PRECIOUS SUTRA WAS ABOUT TO FALL ON THE GROUND

ARE YOU FROM A TEMPLE AROUND HERE?
IT'S MUCH APPRE-CIATED
THANK YOU FOR THAT.
I AM CALLED ENHOU.
NO, WE ARE FROM EIZAN
BUT TO THINK THAT THEY DON'T EVEN HAVE EXTRA ROBES THEY MUST BE LOWER RANKING MONKS, EVEN IF THEY'RE FROM EIZAN
I SEE, SO THEY'RE DIRTY BECAUSE THEY MADE A LONG JOURNEY HERE
!!
WOW, FROM EIZAN?

HMM...
I was excommunicated from Enzan. I don't want to get involved with people from that mountain
Shh!
HMM?
WHAT ARE YOU DOING?
THESE SUTRAS ARE?
THEY ARE TO BE PRESENTED TO HIDEHIRA-SAMA SHORT-LY
OHH-
FARE-WELL
TAKE CARE
AH YES
LET'S GO, ENHOU

THEY SAID THEY WERE FROM EIZAN.
DO YOU KNOW THEM, BENKEI?
NO.
I'VE NEVER SEEN THEM BEFORE.
BUT IT'S BEEN OVER TEN YEARS SINCE I WAS LAST THERE.
HMM...
SO HERE YOU ARE, YOSHITSUNE.
ARE KASUKAMI-SAN AND THE OTHERS WELL?
MORE IMPORTANTLY, THIS ISN'T THE TIME FOR YOU TO BE LOITERING ABOUT HERE.
AH, KICHIJI!
IT'S BEEN A WHILE!!
EH?
WHY NOT?

HUH?
THE NEW GOVERNOR OF MUTSU PROVINCE, FUJIWARA NO NORISUE, IS COMING HERE TO HIRAIZUMI.
WHY WOULD IT BE BAD?
BUT I DIDN'T DO ANYTHING WRONG.
IT WOULD BE A BAD IDEA TO BE FOUND BY NORISUE.
NORIMORI
KIYOMORI
WOMAN
GOVERNOR OF MUTSU, FUJIWARA NO NORISUE
TAIRA NO NORIMORI'S DAUGHTER,
IN OTHER WORDS, KIYOMORI'S YOUNGER BROTHER'S DAUGHTER, IS NORISUE'S WIFE
EH?!
THEN THE NEW GOVERNOR OF MUTSU,
IS ON HEIKE'S SIDE?!!

IT TAKES 6~7 DAYS TO COME HERE FROM TAGAJO,
SO AT THE EARLIEST, HE MAY ARRIVE TOMORROW OR THE DAY AFTER.
YOU SHOULD PROBABLY STAY HIDDEN.
IF NORISUE HAPPENS TO FIND OUT THAT YOU'RE HERE,
!!!
KIYOMORI WILL SEND PEOPLE FOR YOU!!
KIYOMORI...

HIRAIZUMI
MANSION
EXCUSE ME,
MONKS FROM EIZAN HAVE COME TO OFFER SUTRAS
MM, I'VE HEARD LET THEM IN
YES!
I'VE HEARD RUMORS OF THE CAPITAL OF THE NORTH AND WANTED TO PAY MY RESPECTS
IT IS AN HONOR TO MEET YOU

I AM CALLED RYOUAN.
I AM ONE OF THE NEWEST MEMBERS OF ENRYAKUJI OF EIZAN.
YES, WE'VE TAKEN A LOOK AROUND THESE PAST TWO DAYS.
IT WAS WONDERFUL BEYOND THE RUMORS. I WAS EXTREMELY MOVED.
I APPRECIATE YOU MAKING THE LONG JOURNEY HERE.
HAVE YOU TAKEN A LOOK AROUND HIRAIZUMI?
HAHA-HA...
THAT'S A STOUT WOMAN...
TODAY, I SAW A WOMAN CARRYING FOUR LOGS ON HER SHOULDERS, WALKING ALONG WITH A SMILE ON HER FACE.
EVEN THE PEOPLE LOOKED FULL OF LIFE.

I KNOW THAT YOUR PEOPLE LIVING IN SUCH HAPPINESS,
IS THE FRUIT OF THE RULE OF YOUR FAMILY OF OSHU, FUJIWARA-SAMA.
NOT AT ALL.
AND IN COMPARISON, THE CAPITAL,
HAS GROWN WORSE WITH MALCONTENT DUE TO THE RISE OF THE HEIKE.
WELL, EVEN WITHOUT THE HEIKE, THERE IS INHUMAN VIOLENCE,
YOU WERE AWARE?
THE NOBLES ARE FOOLISH AND THE SUBJECTS ARE DEPRESSED.
THROUGH RUMORS.
.....

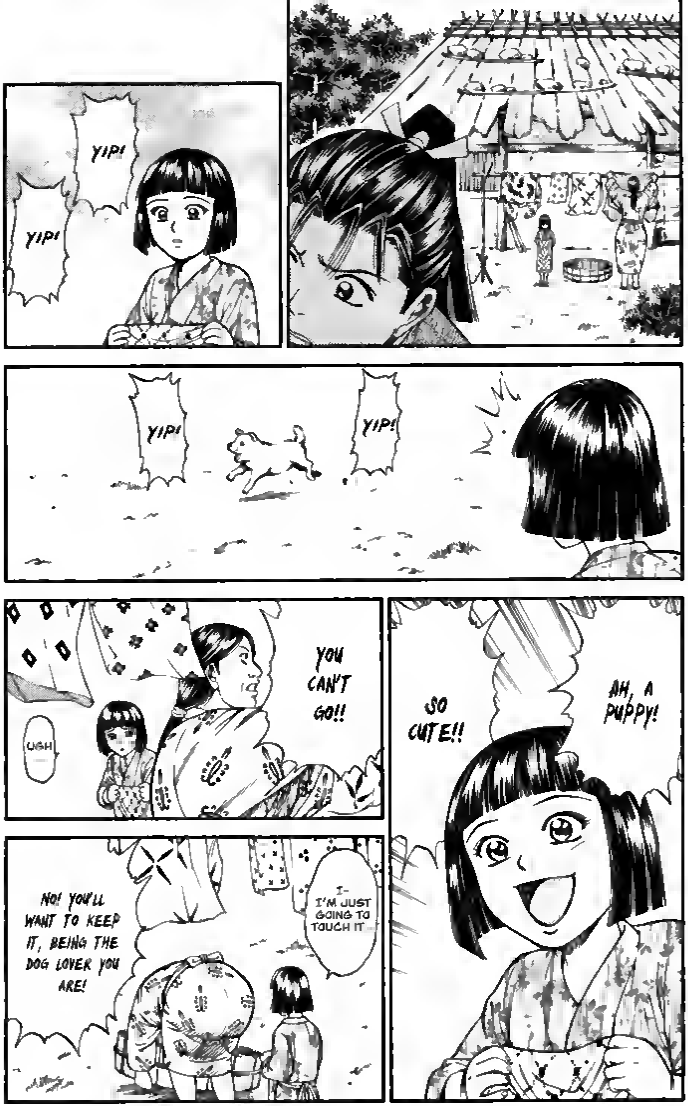
THEN, HIDEHIRA-SAMA,
HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT THE HEIKE BEING AS SUCH?
AS A WARRIOR, I AM IMPRESSED WITH THEIR RISE TO POWER.
IF POSSIBLE, WOULD YOU WISH TO TAKE THEIR PLACE?

IF YOU WISHED FOR POWER, CAN YOU NOT OBTAIN IT?
FOR EXAM-PLE,
A RURAL SAMURAI HAS NO SUCH POWER.
PERHAPS...
BY EMPLOYING THE GENJI,

WE HAVE NOT ONE OUNCE OF SUCH AMBITIONS
FOR GENERATIONS, WE'VE HAD OUR HANDS FULL IN RULING THIS LAND AND DEVELOPING IT.
NOW THEN, PLEASE EXCUSE ME.
PLEASE FORGIVE ME.
LOOK AT ME, I'VE GONE TOO FAR WITH MY JESTING.

WH-WHAT WAS WITH THAT MONK?
DID HE WANT HIDEHARA-SAMA TO SPEAK ILL OF THE HEIKE?
THEY SAY A NEW GOVERNOR IS COMING FOR MUTSU
I HOPE NO TROUBLES ARISE BECAUSE OF A GROUP LIKE THAT...
……
ガラガラガラ
YOSHITSUNE-SAMA,
YOU DON'T HAVE TO TAKE THIS MUCH LUGGAGE
IF IT'S MOTONARI-SAMA'S SECONDARY RESIDENCE IN THE MOUNTAIN, IT SHOULD HAVE MOST OF THESE ITEMS
I WANT TO BE PREPARED IN CASE THAT NORISUE GUY STAYS FOR A LONG TIME!

If I'm not careful, I might even put Hidehira-sama in danger
If that happens he won't lend me his strength in defeating the Heike.
If Kiyomori finds me here, he'll do whatever it takes to kill me
IF THE GOVERNOR OF MUTSU FINDS ME, MY PROMISE WITH USHIWAKA WILL GO UP IN SMOKE!!
I CAN'T LET THAT HAPPEN!!
AH, PLEASE STOP! THE WHEEL IS BEGINNING TO COME OFF!!
EH?
DAMN THIS WORN OUT CART.
BENKEI, CAN YOU FIX THIS?
YES!


YIP!
YIP!
YIP!
YIP!
YOU CAN'T GO!!
UGH...
AH, A PUPPY!
SO CUTE!!
I- I'M JUST GOING TO TOUCH IT
NO! YOU'LL WANT TO KEEP IT, BEING THE DOG LOVER YOU ARE!

Okay.
WE DON'T HAVE ANY FOOD TO FEED A DOG ON TOP OF THAT.
WE HAVE SIX KIDS IN OUR HOUSE!
G-GIVE IT TO ME! I WANT TO RAISE IT AT MY HOUSE!
WOW, IT'S A PUPPY! I'LL RAISE IT AT MY HOUSE!
MISS

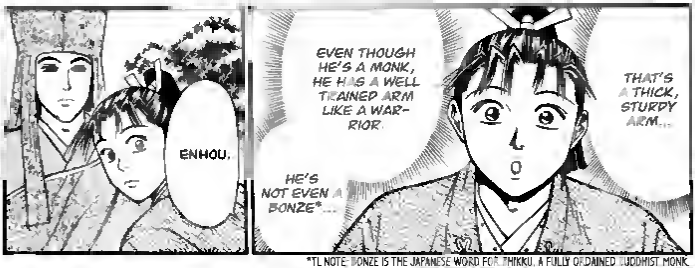
WHAT KIND OF DOGS DO YOU LIKE?
DO YOU LIKE DOGS?
I SEE, PUPPIES, IS IT...?
PUP-FIES...
P-
HMM?
フロ

WHAT'S HE DOING?
AH, THAT'S ENHOU-SAN
OH!!

I'LL GIVE THAT TO YOU, SO BEAR WITH THAT, OKAY?
WOW, IT'S A PUPPY!
SO CUTE!!
I'M GOING TO SHOW MY MOM!!
THANK YOU!!
OKAY!
A-ARE YOU SURE? GIVING SUCH VALUABLE PARER TO A MERE CHILD
IT'S ENOUGH FOR A HOUSE LIKE THIS TO SURVIVE FOR A MONTH

I'M SURE
IF HER LONELINESS GOES AWAY WITH THAT,
IT'S NOT MUCH.
U-UMM--ENHOU-SAN.
C-CAN I GET,
ONE OF A BEAUTIFUL, SEXY WOMAN IN THE NUDE...
AH, YOU'RE FROM THIS MORNING.
HAHAHA-HA, I'M SORRY.
I'M OUT OF PAPER NOW.
EHH?!
I see...

BECAUSE YOU CAN HAVE FUN DRAWING BY YOURSELF...
NO, I'M NOT GOOD, BUT I'VE ALWAYS LIKED IT.
BUT YOU'RE PRETTY GOOD AT DRAWING.
...
NO, I'M NOT THAT GOOD...
I'M SURE YOU CAN PRESENT ARTWORK TO HIDEHIRA-SAMA, TOO.
WITH SKILLS LIKE YOURS,
I'D LOVE TO TRY DRAWING THE PLANTS OF HIRAIZUMI, TOO



*TL NOTE: BONZE IS THE JAPANESE WORD FOR "MIKKU," A FULLY ORDAINED BUDDHIST MONK.

I-I HEAR THAT YOU'RE A GREAT MONK,
WHO'S COME FROM EIZAN.
W-WELL, I AM FROM EIZAN.
TH-THIS CHILD!!
HMM?
A BABY?
H-HE'S...
!!
DEAD!!

BRING HIM BACK TO LIFE!!
PLEASE, THIS CHILD,
EHH?!!

HE'S...
NOT EVEN TWO YET...
AND HE EVEN STOPPED BREATHING TODAY...
HE SUDDENLY GOT A FEVER THREE DAYS AGO...
BUKKYOU MA KA HAN NYA HA RA MIT TA SHIN GYOU KAN JI ZAI BO SATSU GYOU JIN HAN NYA HARA.
A MEMORIAL
TH-THEN...
NO!!
I DON'T NEED A SUTRA!!
UN KAI KUU PO ISSAI KU YAKU SHA RI SHI SHIKI FUI KUU KUU FUI SHIKI SHIKI SOKU ZE KUU KUU SHA RI SHI
HMM?

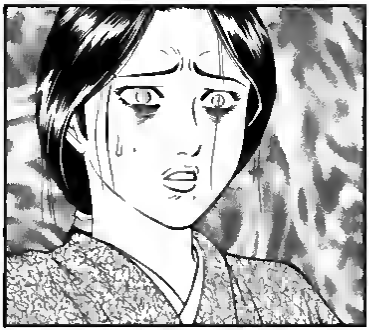
BRING HIM BACK TO LIFE!!
IF YOU'RE A MONK FROM EIZAN, YOU CAN DO IT, CAN'T YOU?!!
UGH...
STEP
...

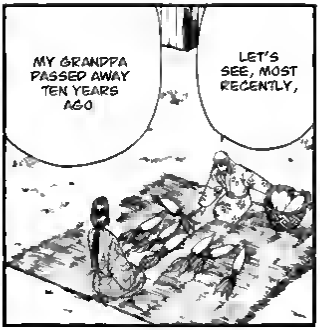
?
GOT IT
HMM, HMM, OKAY
MA'AM, BASED ON WHAT THE MONK TOLD ME,
IT SEEMS THERE IS ONLY ONE WAY
WH-
WHICH IS?!
HUH?!
HMM?

AMONG YOUR FRIENDS AND FAMILY,
FIND ONE WHO HASN'T HAD A MEMBER OF THEIR HOUSE DIE
WH-WHAT?! WHAT IS THIS GUY SAYING?!
IS IT OKAY TO SAY SOMETHING LIKE THAT?!
I-IF I DO, WILL THIS CHILD,
COME BACK TO LIFE?!
IT SEEMS SO.
THAT'S WHAT A GREAT MONK OF EIZAN SAID, SO IT MUST BE TRUE

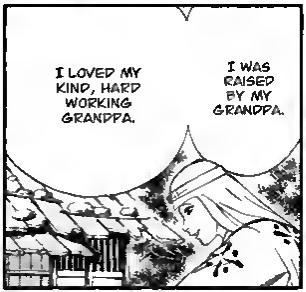
NOW, LET'S GO
OKAY, I'LL ACCOMPANY THIS PERSON, SO PLEASE WAIT FOR ME AT THE INN
WH-WHAT IS HE TRYING TO DO EXACTLY?
.....
GO FOLLOW THAT PERSON
Y-
YES

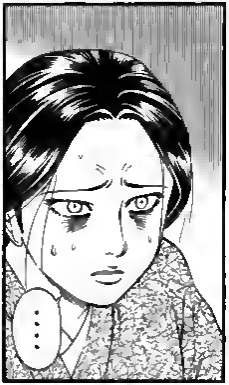
OH, MICHIKO-SAN!
THERE'S SOMETHING I'D LIKE TO ASK YOU...
OSAYU-SAN
HAVE YOU EVER HAD ANYONE IN YOUR HOUSE DIE?
EH?
SOMEONE WHO DIED?
....




LET'S SEE, MOST RECENTLY,
MY GRANDPA PASSED AWAY TEN YEARS AGO

BUT DUE TO AN INJURY, AFTER LESS THAN A MONTH, HE


I LOVED MY KIND, HARD WORKING GRANDPA.
I WAS RAISED BY MY GRANDPA.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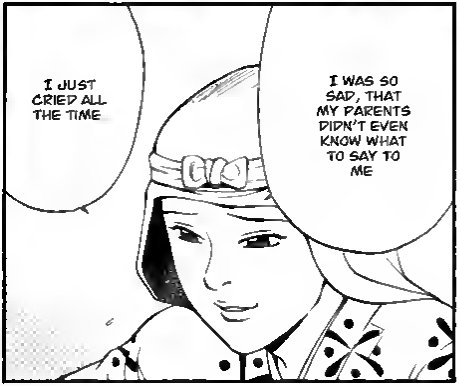
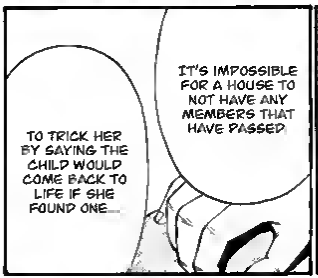
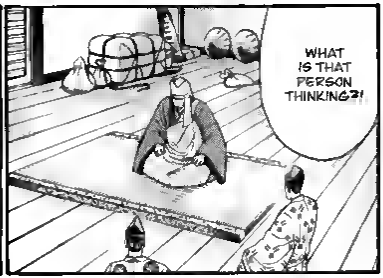
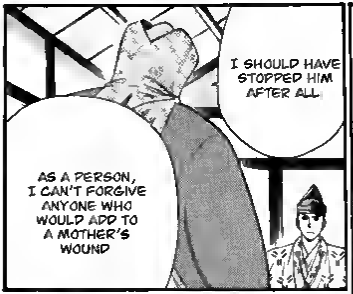

I JUST CRIED ALL THE TIME
I WAS SO SAD, THAT MY PARENTS DIDN'T EVEN KNOW WHAT TO SAY TO ME

SOMEONE WHO DIED? I DO
MY MOM, FIVE YEARS AGO FROM AN ILLNESS OF THE CHEST.
MICHIKO-SAN, DID YOU KNOW?
WHEN PEOPLE ARE REALLY SAD, THEY'RE UNABLE TO CRY.
I'M SURE IT'S BECAUSE THEY DON'T DON'T WANT TO BELIEVE THE FACT.
I FEEL LIKE SHE'S ALWAYS WATCHING FROM SOMEWHERE FAR AWAY.
AFTER SOME TIME PASSED AND I REALIZED MY MOM WASN'T COMING BACK,
I FELT SO LONELY THAT I THOUGHT I WAS GOING TO GO CRAZY.
BUT I THOUGHT I HAD TO LIVE STRONG OR MY MOM WOULD BE SAD IN THE OTHER WORLD
SO I OVER-CAME IT SOME-HOW


IT'S IMPOSSIBLE FOR A HOUSE TO NOT HAVE ANY MEMBERS THAT HAVE PASSED
TO TRICK HER BY SAYING THE CHILD WOULD COME BACK TO LIFE IF SHE FOUND ONE...


WHAT IS THAT PERSON THINKING?!


I SHOULD HAVE STOPPED HIM AFTER ALL
AS A PERSON, I CAN'T FORGIVE ANYONE WHO WOULD ADD TO A MOTHER'S WOUND

WHEN THAT MOTHER REALIZES,
SHE'LL BE MORE DEJECTED THAT NECESSARY!!

SO SHE'S HERE

U-UMM, THE MOTHER HAS COME

How should I call out to her...?
I'm sure her heart is shaking...
The anger from being deceived...
The sadness of her child not returning...
Woh...
HMM?

PLEASE BURY THIS CHILD.
EH?

PLEASE,
LET HIM REST IN PEACE.
H-
HOW?!
THIS CHANGE ...
WHAT EXACTLY HAPPENED?!

WE WILL BURY HIM TOMOR-ROW, SO PLEASE COME.
AH, Y-YES
MONK, PLEASE RECEIVE THAT CHILD
PLEASE DO.
...

YES...
ACTUALLY...
I MEAN, ENHOU, WHAT EXACTLY HAPPENED?
NO...
SHE CONTINUED TO LISTEN TO HER FRIENDS ABOUT PEOPLE WHO DIED IN THEIR HOUSES...
FIFTEEN YEARS AGO, MY LITTLE BROTHER
THREE YEARS AGO, MY FATHER
LAST YEAR, MY GRANDMA
HARU-SAN...
ガヨッ
And the sixth house...

OH, OMICCHAN!
WHAT'S WITH THE GLOOMY FACE?!
UMM HARU-SAN, HAS ANYONE...
IN YOUR HOUSE EVER DIED?
?
AH, IT'S THE LOG HAG
HAS ANYONE EVER DIED?
THAT'S SO OUT OF THE BLUE!
FORGET ABOUT THAT, HOW'S TATSU-BOU DOING?
HEY-TATSU-BOU!!
THAT'S SUCH A DOWNER!

!!!
COME INSIDE

I DIDN'T REALLY TELL PEOPLE
SO YOU PROBABLY DON'T KNOW EITHER, OMIC-CHAN.
BUT THIS HAPPENED EIGHTEEN YEARS AGO
EH?
I WAS FINALLY BLESSED WITH A SON
BECAUSE HE WAS A CHILD I HAD IN MY LATER YEARS, I ADORED HIM SO MUCH.
HE WAS TRULY THE APPLE OF MY EYES
THEN, HE CAUGHT A COLD IN THE BEGINNING OF ONE FALL AND HAD A HIGH FEVER.
IN LESS THAN THREE DAYS, HE JUST...

SINCE HE WAS BORN
IT WAS ONLY FIVE MONTHS
Had such a difficult experience...
Even Haru-san
!!
SO I TRIED TO KILL MYSELF...
I RESENTED AND HATED MYSELF FOR ALLOWING HIM TO CATCH A COLD

After hearing that I sensed that I shouldn't die.
I had to live for that child's part too.
I thought I heard that child crying.
But at that moment
WAHH!
WAHH!
WAHH!
I GRIT MY TEETH AND LIVE MY LIFE WITH A SMILE!
THAT'S WHY, NOW, NO MATTER HOW HARD THINGS GET,
OMIC-CHAN.
ZOOT

HANG IN THERE!!
Haru-san..
.....

I-I SEE TELLING HER TO FIND A HOUSE WITHOUT ANY DEAD MEMBERS,
WAS TO MAKE HER RE ..LIZE EVERYONE ELSE GOES THROUGH THE SAME SADNESS,
AND TO EASE THAT SADNESS OF HERS!!
And with that the mother
She regained her senses and requested a burial
THIS CHILD HE THOUGHT OF A WAY TO SAVE HER IN AN INSTANT,
AND IN A WAY EVEN A HIGH MONK WOULDN'T THINK OF!!

WH-WHO ARE YOU?!
!!
YOU'RE NOT EIZAN MONKS, ARE YOU?
BEFORE THAT, WHO ARE YOU GUYS?
BENKEI, WHO WAS AT EIZAN, DIDN'T KNOW YOU
WH-WHAT ARE YOU...
IT WASN'T THE RECITING OF ONE WHO READS SUTRAS ALL THE TIME
AND THE HEART SUTRA YOU SUDDENLY RECITED WAS HORRIBLE

WHAT ARE YOU PLOTTING HERE IN OSHU?!
UGH...
HE HAS JUST ARRIVED SAFELY ALONG WITH HIS BELONGINGS...
EXCUSE ME.
MITSUHASHI-SAMA IS HERE.

NORISUE-SAMA
DON'T TELL ME!
NORI SUE
NOW THAT YOU'VE REALIZED THAT MUCH,
I CAN NO LONGER HIDE IT

I AM THE NEWLY APPOINTED,
GOVERNOR OF MUTSU, FUJIWARA NO NORISUE!!

TH-THIS GUY'S,
THE HEIKE GOVERNOR OF MUTSU?!!
CHAPTER 62 END

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SHANA OH YOSHITSUNE

by SAWADA Hirofumi / 沢田 ひろふみ

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Chapter 63
Hyouta's Search for "Ushiwaka"

GOVERNOR OF MUTSU!!
TH-THIS GUY IS THE HEIKE'S,

FORCING ONE TO STATE THEIR NAME AND NOT STATING YOUR OWN IS RUDE!
STATE YOUR NAME AS WELL! WHO ARE YOU?
UGH... I...
I'M...
H-
HYOU-TA...
MY NAME'S HYOUTA.
HYOUTA-DONO...

EXCUSE ME!!
AH!

I-I DIDN'T EVEN KNOW YOU WERE THE GOVERNOR OF MUTSU,
A-AND I WAS SO RUDE TO YOU...

HYOUTA-DONO, PLEASE WAIT!!
IF YOU DON'T MIND,
I'D LIKE TO KNOW WHERE YOU LIVE
WH-WHERE I LIVE?
WHY?

ACTUALLY, THERE'S A SOMETHING I'D LIKE TO DO,
AND I MIGHT WANT TO ASK YOU FOR YOUR ASSISTANCE, HYOUTA-DONO.
NO, NO, NO WAY
I'M NOT CAPABLE OF ANYTHING
...
AH, HYOUTA-DONO!!
DARN.
HE RAN AWAY
I SEE.
BUT TO THINK SOMEONE SO WISE IS ROAMING ABOUT THE TOWN STREETS.
HIKAIZUMI IS AN INTERESTING LAND.

BUT NOW THAT WE'VE BEEN EXPOSED TO ONE PERSON,
WE MUST OFFICIALLY GO AND GREET HIDEHIRA-DONO BEFORE RUMORS SPREAD...
YES.
I WAS SURPRISED.
AND WILL YOU MENTION THAT?
MM!
BUT I DON'T KNOW IF HE WILL BE FRANK ND REVEAL IT OR NOT...
THIS WILL BE A CH LLENGE!

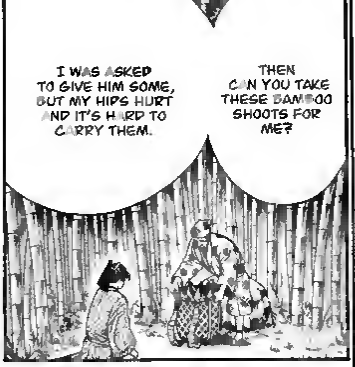
I HAVE TO STAY IN THE HOUSE SO THEY DON'T EVER SEE ME AGAIN

PHEW, THAT WAS CLOSE
BUT I MESSED UP THEY COMPLETELY KNOW MY FACE NOW

UMM, EXCUSE ME. DO YOU KNOW WHERE IN THIS AREA MOTONARI-SAMA'S SECOND HOUSE IS?
HMM ?

WHERE IS IT?

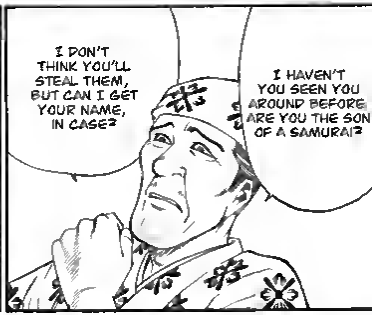
BUT MOTONARI-SAMA'S SECOND HOUSE
I'M PRETTY SURE IT WAS AROUND HERE

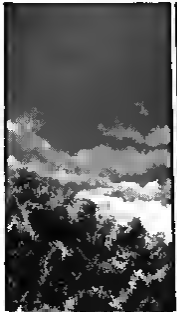

I WAS ASKED TO GIVE HIM SOME, BUT MY HIPS HURT AND IT'S HARD TO CARRY THEM.
THEN CAN YOU TAKE THESE BAMBOO SHOOTS FOR ME?

ARE YOU GOING TO MOTONARI-SAMA'S PLACE?
IF YOU WANT MOTONARI-SAMA'S SECOND HOUSE, YOU'LL SEE IT IF YOU GO STRAIGHT DOWN THIS ROAD.
Y-YES, I HAVE SOME BUSINESS...

I SEE....
I DON'T MIND.

RIGHT...
MY NAME'S YOSHITSUNE. I CAME TO HIRAIZUMI ABOUT HALF A YEAR AGO.
I SEE SORRY, BUT I'LL LEAVE THAT TO YOU


I DON'T THINK YOU'LL STEAL THEM, BUT CAN I GET YOUR NAME, IN CASE?
I HAVEN'T YOU SEEN YOU AROUND BEFORE. ARE YOU THE SON OF A SAMURAI?



WHEN MY LIFE'S BEING TARGETED...?
UGH
WHY DO I HAVE TO CARRY BAMBOO SHOOTS...

THE NEXT DAY
HIRA-ZUMI MANSION
FUJI-WARA NO NORISUE-SAMA
NORMALLY, IT IS I WHO SHOULD HAVE GONE TO SEE YOU. THANK YOU FOR TAKING THE TRIP

I AM FUJIWARA NO HIDEHIRA.
IT IS AN HONOR TO MEET YOU.
HIS INOFFENSIVE ATTITUDE YESTERDAY, AND NOW THIS...
HE'S A CRAFTY ONE...
Honor to meet me, is it?
To think that he would play the fool until I mention it first

DO NOT TAKE OFFENSE
I PUT ON AN ACT BECAUSE AS THE GOVERNOR, I WANTED TO SEE THE TRUE SELF OF OF OSHU'S RULER.
HIDEHIRA-DONO,
I WAS RUDE YESTERDAY.
I DID NOT TAKE ANY IN THE SLIGHTEST

THANK YOU FOR YOUR KIND WORDS.
THERE SEEMS TO BE MUCH TALENT IN OSHU
MM, A SPLENDID DANCE
!!
!!
THAT A SON OF GENJI HAD COME HERE TO HIRAIZUMI...
SPEAK-ING OF WHICH
I JUST HAPPENED TO HEAR

I THINK THE NAME WAS USHIWAKAMARU
よお！
ホーホケキョ

I WONDER, HAVE YOU MET HIM?
USHI-WAKA-MARU.
LET ME SEE, USHIWAKA-MARU...
I HAVE NOT HEARD THE NAME BEFORE

ARE YOU SURE HE IS HERE IN HIRAIZUMI?

YOU DO NOT KNOW OF HIM...
I SEE
I DO NOT

EH, THE GOVERNOR OF MUTSU,
IS SEARCHING FOR ME?!
HIS OBJECTIVE FOR COMING ALL THE WAS TO HIRAIZUMI HIMSELF,
WAS YOU AFTER ALL
THERE'S NO GUARANTEE FOR YOUR LIFE IF YOU'RE FOUND
!!

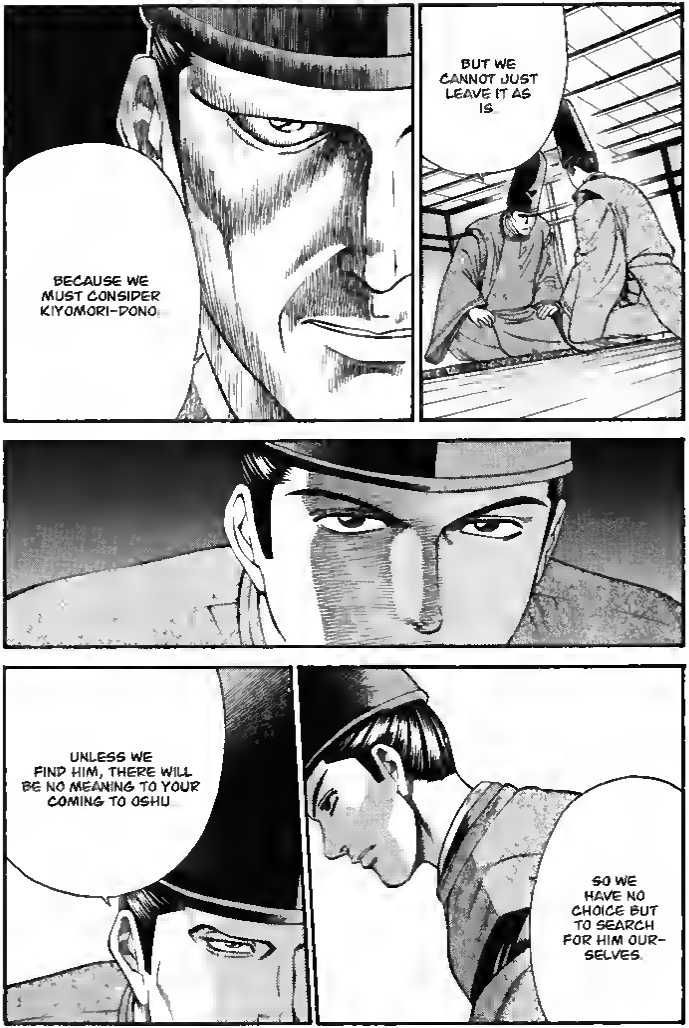
DO NOT LET THEM FIND YOU, EVER!!
BUT THIS WILL MEAN TROUBLE FOR HIDEHIRA-SAMA, TOO.
IT WOULD BE FINE IF YOU ALONE WERE KILLED,
...
WHAT DO YOU MEAN? OUR ONLY OPTION IS TO WAIT HERE QUIETLY UNTIL HE LEAVES.
WHAT WILL YOU DO?
Y-YOSHI-TSUNE-SAMA.

IF THEY EVEN KNOW THAT HE'S A LITTLE MUNCHKIN,
IT'S ONLY A MATTER OF TIME BEFORE THEY FIND YOU
MOST IMPORTANTLY, YOU'VE BEEN SEEN
DEPENDS HOW MUCH INFORMATION THEY HAVE ON YOSHITSUNE THOUGH...
UGH!
WOULD BE NORIMITSU, THE NEPHEW WHO IS SAID TO HAVE COME WITH HIM.
IF THAT PERSON WAS THE GOVERNOR OF MUTSU, THEN THAT ENHOU PERSON THAT WAS WITH HIM,
HE DOESN'T SEEM LIKE SOMEONE WHO CAME HERE TO KILL ME, THOUGH...
HMM... BUT THAT PERSON,
AH!!
.....

EH?
WE'LL DO MAINTENANCE ON OUR WEAPONS WHILE YOSHI-TSUNE COMES UP WITH A PLAN.
BENKEI,
HMM...
Y-YES!!
IS THE VASSAL'S DUTY, RIGHT?
PROTECTING YOSHITSUNE EVEN IF WE HAVE TO FIGHT THE GOVERNOR'S MILITARY,
TO HIDE MY IDENTITY...
A PLAN...

I HAVE JUST RETURNED, NORISUE-SAMA.
MM
THE REST OF YOU TAKE YOUR LEAVE

YES
...
...AS EXPECTED...
HIDEHIRA-DONO EVADED ME.
HOW DID IT GO YESTERDAY?


BECAUSE WE MUST CONSIDER KIYOMORI-DONO.
BUT WE CANNOT JUST LEAVE IT AS IS.
UNLESS WE FIND HIM, THERE WILL BE NO MEANING TO YOUR COMING TO OSHU.
SO WE HAVE NO CHOICE BUT TO SEARCH FOR HIM OUR-SELVES.

WITHOUT FAIL!!
ONCE YOU FIND HIM, YOU KNOW, YES?
MAKE SURE YOU ARE NOT FOUND OUT.
YES.

WHAT IS IT?
EXCUSE ME!
A GUEST?
THERE IS A GUEST HERE
YOU'RE!!
AH

HYOUTA-DONO!!
SO YOU CAME!!
HEHEHE, HELLO...
I THOUGHT MAYBE I SHOULD HELP OUT AFTER ALL, IF THERE'S SOMETHING I CAN DO...
THANK YOU VERY MUCH.
THIS IS QUITE REASSURING, NORISUE-SAMA

ALL RIGHT, I'VE DECIDED!!
EH?
GOING STRAIGHT TO THE ENEMY
ARE YOU SURE ABOUT THAT?
THAT'S

D-BUT, IF YOU DO THAT AND YOU'RE FOUND OUT SOMEHOW...!
I'LL EVADE THEM BY PRETENDING TO HELP THEM WITH THEIR SEARCH.
I'LL BURY MYSELF INTO THE ENEMY'S BOSOM!!
GOOD
YOU CANNOT SEE YOUR OWN EYELASHES." RIGHT?!!
IT'S OKAY EVEN IF YOU CAN SEE A DISTANT MOUNTAIN.
I'VE NEVER HEARD IT
IS THERE SUCH A SAYING?
.....

ACTUALLY, I HAVE A FAVOR TO ASK OF YOU, HYOUTA-DONO
LET US TALK ALONG THE WAY
?
YES
YABE-DONO, I DON'T NEED AN ESCORT, SO PLEASE REMAIN HERE

UMM
THE FACT THAT YOU CAME TOGETHER WITH THE GOVERNOR OF MUTSU,
MEANS THAT YOU'RE HIS NEPHEW, NORIMITSU-SAMA, RIGHT?
EH?

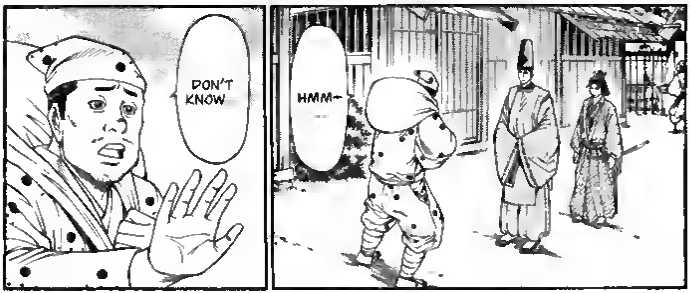
SO, WHAT IS IT YOU WANTED TO ASK OF ME, NORIMITSU-SAMA?
YES, ACTUALLY, I'M SEARCHING FOR SOMEONE THAT'S HERE IN HIRAIZUMI
I'M SORRY FOR INTRODUCING MYSELF AS ENHOU
YES
A PERSON NAMED USHIWAKAMARU
!!
……

KIYOMORI!!!
WH-WHY ARE YOU SEARCHING FOR HIM?
WELL, THAT IS...
A CERTAIN PERSON WANTS TO KNOW HIS WHEREABOUTS... SO...
SO THEY'RE ACTING ON KIYOMORI'S INSTRUCTIONS AFTER ALL!!

A SHORT SWORD!!
THE GOVERNOR OF MUTSU REALLY DID RECEIVE ORDERS FROM KIYOMORI
NORIMITSU HERE,
IS AN ASSASSIN THAT CAME TO KILL ME!!
AND THE ONE EXECUTING THEM IS__!!

A-ABOUT HOW MUCH DO YOU KNOW ABOUT THIS USHIWAKAMARU PERSON?
BUT BECAUSE I'M UNFAMILIAR WITH THIS LAND, I WANTED TO ASK YOU TO GUIDE ME AROUND, HYOUTA-DONO.
EH?
IS THERE ANYONE LIKE THAT AROUND YOU, HYOUTA-DONO?
HMM... ONLY HIS NAME...
THAT HE'S A 16-17 YEAR OLD SON OF A SAMURAI,
AND THAT IF HE DID COME TO HIRAIZUMI, IT WOULD HAVE BEEN WITHIN THESE PAST SIX MONTHS...
W-WELL, I WAS RAISED IN HIRAIZUMI ALL MY LIFE,
BUT I HAVEN'T SEEN ANYONE LIKE THAT RECENTLY...
I SEE THEN LET US TRY ASKING AROUND.
I have to lead him on somehow and have him give up before he realizes it's me!
OKAY.

HALF A YEAR AGO?
THE SON OF A SAMURAI WHO CAME,


DON'T KNOW
HMM~

I SEE
Of course not
I'm taking him to places I haven't been to in Hiraizumi on purpose
There's no way he knows me!!

THIS IS REALLY DIFFICULT, ISN'T IT?
YES.
COULD IT BE THAT THAT USHIWAKAMARU PERSON ISN'T HERE IN HIRAIZUMI?
...
BUT LET US TRY SEARCHING A BIT MORE
OKAY
TCH

EH, REALLY?
I THINK I SAW HIM!!
YEAH!
Remember meeting or seeing you before!!
You liar. I don't...
HMM?
I'M PRETTY SURE HE HAD A ROUND FACE AND NEAT EYEBROWS
AH, PLEASE WAIT A MOMENT

I THINK SO...
I DON'T REMEMBER THE REST...
SOMETHING LIKE THIS?
HYOUTA-DONO,
WE HAVE A BIT OF A CLUE NOW.
AH- YOU'RE SO GOOD AT DRAWING, NORIMITSU-DONO...
NOW, IF WE FIND OUT HIS FACIAL FEATURES, IT WILL BE EASY TO FIND HIM!
I WONDER IF IT'S SOMETHING LIKE THIS
HMM, NOW THAT I THINK ABOUT IT,
BECAUSE HE'S 16-17, HE SHOULD HAVE A TOPKNOT
IT WOULD BE NICE IF HE LOOKED LIKE THIS DRAWING...
.....

THERE ARE A TON OF PEOPLE AROUND HERE WHO ARE 16-17 AND BORN TO SAMURAI...
PHEW... HE'S NOWHERE TO BE FOUND...
BY THE WAY, NORIMITSU-DONO,
WHY DID YOU COME ALL THE WAY TO HIRAIZUMI?
EH?

YOU'RE THE GOVERNOR OF MUTSU'S NEPHEW, NOT HIS ELDEST SON.
SO YOU SHOULDN'T EVEN HAVE A REASON TO MEET WITH HIDEHIRA-SAMA.
SO WHY?
TH-THAT'S BECAUSE NORISUE-SAMA INVITED ME,
AND I WANTED TO SEE OSHU AS WELL.
....

OHH... SO YOU'RE CLOSE WITH THE GOVERNOR OF MUTSU?
EH?
AND YOUR PARENTS?
I WAS RAISED BY NORISUE-SAMA SINCE CHILDHOOD.
I HAVEN'T SEEN MY MOTHER SINCE MY FATHER PASSED AWAY.
MY FATHER PASSED AWAY WHEN I WAS EIGHT.

THEN WASN'T IT OVERWHELMING TO BE IN THE HOUSE OF A GREAT NOBLE?
THE GOVERNOR OF MUTSU SEEMS STRICT.
.....
.....
NOT REALLY.

I HAVE JUST RETURNED
THESE ARE SIGNS OF YOU WEARING A GAUNTLET
WAIT!

DID YOU GO OUT FOR MARTIAL TRAINING AGAIN?
DOES THE LIFE OF A NOBLE BORE YOU?
DO YOU ENJOY THE MARTIAL ARTS TO THAT EXTENT?
NO
I HATE THE MARTIAL ARTS
THEN WHY?
……

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YOU STAY HERE AND REFLECT FOR A WHILE!!
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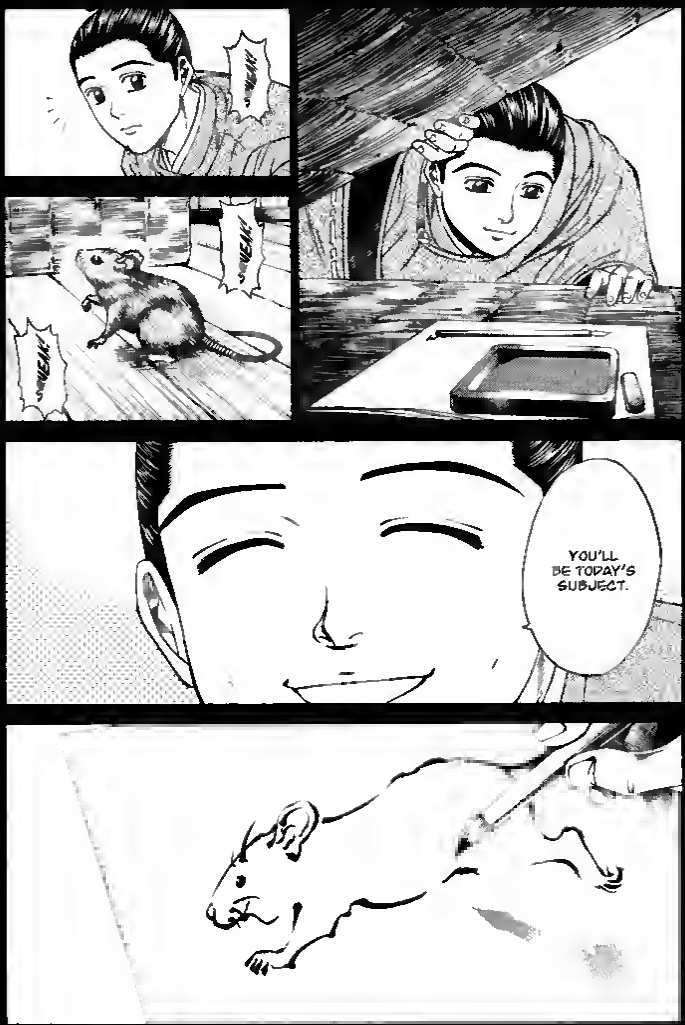
……
バーン
DD


SQUEAK!
SQUEAK!
SQUEAK!
YOU'LL BE TODAY'S SUBJECT.

AH
I'M SORRY
HMM?
NORIMITSU -DONO?
WHAT'S THE MATTER?
YOU GOT QUIET ALL OF A SUDDEN
I WAS TALKING ABOUT GROWING UP IN NORISUE-SAMA'S HOUSE, RIGHT?
I-IT'S NOTHING
NOW, LET US ASK AROUND
I HAD NO INCONVENIENCES WHATSOEVER

And being raised in someone else's home
Losing both your parents at eight
...
There's no way...
You wouldn't any inconveniences...
AH!
THIS GUY'S HERE TO KILL ME!
NO, NO! WHAT AM I DOING GETTING TRICKED?
I HAVE TO HURRY AND GET HIM TO GIVE UP!!

NORIMITSU-DONO, THE FACT THAT WE'VE ASKED AROUND THIS MUCH WITH NO RESULTS,
MEANS THAT HE ISN'T HERE AFTER ALL
WHY NOT GIVE UP?
HMM~?
AFTER ASKING ONE MORE PERSON,
WE'LL CALL IT A DAY FOR TODAY.
WHAT? YOU'RE PLANNING ON DOING THIS AGAIN TOMORROW?!
THIS IS BAD! IF WE GO ANYWHERE ELSE, WE'LL END UP GOING TO PLACES I'VE BEEN TO BEFORE!!

AH!
LET'S TRY ASKING THAT PERSON THERE.
AH.
HMM?
?
PLEASE GO ASK HIM BY YOURSELF!!
AH, I'M GOING TO GO PEE REALLY QUICKLY!
THIS IS BAD!!

THAT OLD MAN'S,
THE BAMBOO SHOOT GUY FROM YESTERDAY!!
THAT PERSON'S SEEN MY FACE
AND HE KNOWS MY NAME, TOO!!
PLEASE!!
TELL ME YOU FORGOT!!

I MET HIM YESTERDAY
AH...
I KNOW HIM
R-REALLY?!
N-NORIMITSU-DONO, DID YOU FIND ANYTHING OUT?
I LEARNED A LOT, HYOUTA-DONO!
THANK YOU VERY MUCH

IT SEEMS HE'S GOING BY THE NAME YOSHITSUNE!
BUT APPARENTLY, HE'S AROUND 15 AND THE SON OF A SAMURAI!
AND IT SEEMS HE HAD ROUND EYES!
HE DIDN'T REMEMBER HIS NOSE OR MOUTH,
BUT LET'S TRY ADDING A REGULAR NOSE AND MOUTH FOR NOW!
H-HOW DOES IT LOOK?
...
!!!

ゴ
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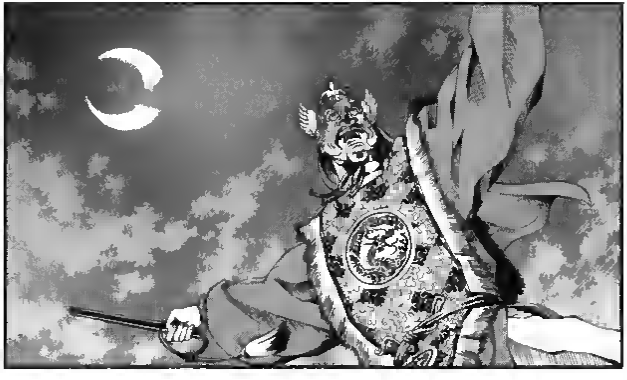
HE KNOWS!!
H-
CHAPTER 63 END



あとがき

忙しい毎日が続きふと気付くとhideの「ROCKET DIVE」の冒頭の歌詞がずっと頭の中を駆け巡っていたので、気分転換にハワイに行って参りました。
有名なワイキキビーチは遊泳中にサンゴで足を切り、買い物には興味がないのでででかいショッピングモールでもそれほど楽しめず、周りの日本人がウザイとしか思えない私にはオアフ島はもういいやという感じでした。
しかし、その前3泊したハワイ島は人口が少なくビルもそんなにない田舎な感じでとても癒されました。ホテルのベランダからずっと海と空と山々を見ていて、映画でよく見る、椅子に座って一日中海を見ている老人の気持ちがとても良く理解できたほどです。疲れた時にはやっぱ自然が一番だね！

さて、次の18巻、19巻は10月11月2か月連続で発売予定です。それに「山賊王」9巻も加わるので、2か月で3冊出る事になりますから、今からお小遣いを貯めて楽しみに待っていて下さい。

さぁて、連載プラス3冊分の単行本仕事が待っているのか‥‥私には‥‥‥‥逃げるか、ハワイ島に!?

2006.6.25　沢田ひろふみ

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